

Taskforce Recommends Steck-Vaughn Materials

GED 21ST CENTURY SOFTWARE

The **GED 21st Century Software** can be networked to each computer on center. It provides 10 half-length content area practice tests to prescribe instruction and the 10 full-length tests to predict success.

Areas of instruction include: Language Arts (Writing I & II), reading, social studies, science, mathematics (Parts I & II), organization skills, synthesis skills and workplace documents, visual literacy skills and calculator and alternate answer format skills.

The program bridges assessment, instruction and reporting and allows you to analyze test performance by content and cognitive demand.

Costs

- \$4,000 for the networked Windows program.
- \$3,000 to get a license to put on all computers at a center.
- \$1,500 for a hard drive version that can only go on one computer.

Questions

- E-mail Dean Bradford at Great Onyx Job Corps Center at deanb@jcdc.jobcorps.org.
- E-mail Fred Browning at Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center at brownf@jcdc.jobcorps.org.

LEARNING-100 SERIES PROGRAM

The **Learning-100 Series Program** helps students with vocabulary, reading, sentence structure and writing skills.

There are several different levels of the program that you can purchase, ranging from zero to 16-plus reading levels.

Costs

- You must purchase a group of levels, which costs \$1,500.

Questions

- E-mail Shirley Bryant at Carl D. Perkins Job Corps Center at sjbryant90@hotmail.com.

Pine Knot Job Corps Center Gives Insight on High School Diploma Program

Beginning and maintaining a high school diploma program is a challenging task. Whether you are trying to start a co-enrollment partnership or an on-site high school, creating a successful program requires dedication, persistence and patience.

Pine Knot Job Corps Center, in Pine Knot, Ky., is a great example of a center with a well-established high school diploma program. Its on-site high school, Pine Knot Career Institute, has partnered with the McCreary Board of Education since January 2000.

"We are classified as an A-6 alternative high school under Kentucky regulations, which allows our students to complete their credits in a competency-based program," said principal teacher Valerie Harwood.

The requirements for each credit are in line with the Kentucky Program of Study and the district requirements for obtaining a high school diploma.

Getting certified teachers is an important element in organizing an on-site high school.

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Scoring Backlogs, Paperwork Problems Accompany New GED

The revised edition of the GED test, first taken in Job Corps Region II in February, has caused scoring difficulties and paperwork problems in many Region II states.

Issues throughout the Region include:

- **Initial test scores are taking up to three months or longer to be returned in some states;**
- **Test results are being lost;**
- **Spanish GED test results are taking longer to be returned;**
- **Slow turnaround time negatively affects students' and centers' performance.**

According to Education Week, the new test has resulted in a slower scoring system. An increase in scoring errors has been reported because the tests are scored entirely electronically. Only six states – Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, New York, Ohio and Texas – used such a scoring system before 2001.

Many states had to retrain and prepare testing personnel to ensure correct administration of the new test, which took a few weeks.

Test takers are required to fill out eight pages of demographic information, heavily increasing the amount of paperwork. All of this information, in addition to the actual test, is sent to one of 16 grading sites. Before the new test, there were 3,200 grading centers. (The reduction is due to a post-Sept. 11 budget cut and helps to ensure security in grading.)

In Kentucky, the seven Job Corps centers requested a meeting with state Education Commissioner Cheryl King and state GED Test Administrator Lisa Fort. The purpose of the meeting was to share the centers' concerns and to work on solutions for obtaining test results in a timely manner.

At the meeting the commissioner shared the state of Kentucky's plan and stated that the overall goal for the state is to have a turnaround time of 10 days or less for GED test results.

To meet this goal, the state is assembling a SWAT team to assess testing procedures at each test site, with particular attention given to the length of time it takes for the tests to get to scoring sites, how the tests are mailed and the processes used by the scoring sites.

Once the SWAT team has completed this assessment, they will make recommendations to the commissioner. If you are interested in learning more about this meeting or organizing something similar in your state, please contact Val Randolph at vrando@edu-mgt.com.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAMS

Continued from front page...

"In our memo of understanding (MOU) with the McCreary Board of Education, we made sure the school district provided us with a certified instructor," said Harwood.

"At Pine Knot, we realize being allowed to earn a high school diploma is a privilege."

— Valerie Harwood,
Principal teacher

"Once the program grew, we received an additional teacher and the school board allowed center teachers who were certified in secondary education to teach freshman- and sophomore-level classes."

The on-site school is self-paced and allows students to receive credits for vocational training, work-based learning, career development services classes, workplace communications and residential living.

"We set high standards for our students," said Harwood. "Students who enroll in the program are required to sign a contract that states they will maintain acceptable levels on the Evaluation Student Performance (ESP), exhibit employable behavior in all areas of the center, make acceptable daily progress, follow all of the educational standards and achieve an 80 percent or better on assignments."

Pine Knot Job Corps Center has 104 students currently enrolled in the program, with 48 students expected to begin the program in the fall.

"At Pine Knot, we realize being allowed to earn a high school diploma is a privilege," said Harwood.

Pine Knot developed a program that meets the needs of each student. If students are able to pass the GED test, they are required to do so before they enroll in the high school program. If students have special needs, a different avenue is taken.

"By doing this, we protect the accountability of the school district and prevent students from dropping out of the program," said Harwood.

Once students graduate, they receive a diploma from the McCreary Board of Education. The school district receives Averaged Daily Attendance (ADA) dollars, and the statistics from Pine Knot students are included in their results.

Last year, 86 students graduated with a high school diploma from Pine Knot Job Corps Center. In other words, more than 30 percent of Pine Knot students received high school diplomas.

*Pine Knot Job Corps Center
in Pine Knot, Ky.*



Developing a high school diploma program for your center requires research, evaluation and persistence. Before deciding which program is best for your center, it's important to do your homework – learn the laws governing high school programs in your state, remembering that each state will have different requirements and each center will have a different MOU.

Also, contact your local school district and surrounding counties to decide on a high school diploma program that fits your center's needs.

There are several high school diploma program options to consider:

On-site High School

Job Corps centers with an on-site high school offer certified high school courses to their students. To do this, the center must build a relationship with the local board of education so the students can receive a high school diploma. Students take all of their remaining high school courses at the center, and the local board of education issues the diplomas.

Partnership with a Local School District

A partnership with a local school district allows students attending Job Corps to complete their high school diploma requirements

at a local high school. This partnership usually benefits students who have very few credits left to complete.

Co-enrollment Program

A co-enrollment program consists of a partnership with a local school district that allows Job Corps students to attend high school for their remaining credits and potential high school drop-out students to enroll in Job Corps' vocational classes.

Online Programs

There are several online programs available that allow students to earn their high school diplomas through the Internet. The state of Kentucky has an online program, and some Region II centers are using the Novel Online program.

Partner with your State

When a center partners with its state department of education, the state will recognize a student who has earned a GED and finished the Job Corps program by issuing a state high school diploma. The state of Maryland has been doing this for 30 years.

If you would like more information on high school diploma programs, please call Valerie Harwood at Pine Knot Job Corps Center, (606) 354-2176.

Helpful Hints

Establish a pre-GED class to focus on preparing students for the GED test. This will help student writing scores, critical thinking abilities and readiness for official testing at the state level.

Use a practice test score of 450 or above as the benchmark for GED test readiness.

If a student does not pass the GED test, begin using pre-GED materials, but do not put the student back in a lower course.

If you fast-track GED and CPP classes, vocational managers may get frustrated. To help this problem, incorporate work-based learning opportunities.

If you would like to see a topic covered in an upcoming newsletter, please send an e-mail to Maury Caby at McNeely Pigott & Fox, mcaby@mpf.com.

